



ASN1C

ASN.1 Compiler
Version 7.6
Installation Guide

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Installing the ASN1C Compiler Software

Version 7.x of the ASN1C compiler software is packaged in two or three separate distribution units, depending on how ASN1C is licensed:

- A System Development Kit (SDK) unit that contains the compiler and development libraries.
- One or more run-time deployment units containing optimized binary libraries for deployment of a finished application.
- A floating license server application (available for Windows and various UNIXes).

The floating license server application is only provided to customers who have purchased a floating license configuration of the compiler.

The following sections describe installation instructions for Windows and UNIX versions of the ASN1C distribution files. The final section describes techniques for users of 5.x-era versions to port code to 6.x-era versions of ASN1C.

Some basic familiarity with Windows and UNIX commands is assumed in the following sections. In particular, it is assumed that users understand how to install programs and unzip archives, so we will spend most of the text discussing how to configure and test the applications once the base installation is complete.

Windows Installations

The Microsoft Windows version of ASN1C is usually distributed electronically over the Internet although in special cases, a CD can be provided if required. The distribution files are self-extracting, executable setup files. The format of the filename of the SDK unit is `acvNNNw32sdk.exe` or `acvNNNx64sdk.exe`. (Throughout this document, `w32` is freely interchangeable with `x64`; we will use `w32` by convention.) `NNN` is replaced with a 3 digit release version number (major, minor, patch), as in `acv760w32sdk.exe`. In some cases, a fourth digit may be added to designate a special post-release patch to fix a specific issue before the next full patch release is issued.

The format of the runtime library filename is `rtLvNNNw32TYP.exe`. `L` is replaced with `p` (C/C++), `j` (Java), or `s` (C#). `NNN` retains the same meaning as in the SDK kits. `TYP` is replaced with a three-letter code indicating the type of the kit: limited or unlimited, binary or source, and the encoding rule set. For example, `rtjv760w32uba.exe` indicates a Java binary runtime kit with unlimited redistribution rights (`u` for unlimited; `b` for binary; `a` for all encoding rules).

The floating license package is versioned separately from ASN1C and is distributed in an executable self-extracting installation file (like other Windows kits). The package is named `rlmsvrw32.exe`.

Installing the RLM Floating License Server

Objective Systems uses the Reprise License Manager for license checking in the ASNIC SDK. Licenses come in both floating and per-user configurations. Users who request a floating license may host the license server remotely with Objective Systems or locally on their own machine. This section details a local installation of the RLM license server. Per-user licenses are provided by Objective Systems, and their installation is covered in future sections.

The server can be started from a command line or run as a service. It requires a license file (provided by Objective Systems, usually called `server.lic`) to run. Users should not confuse this license file with the license provided for node-locked kits, or the corresponding `client.lic` file used to tell ASNIC to communicate with the license server.

The `rlm` command is invoked like this (command-line options can be in any order):

```
% rlm [-c license_file] [-dlog [+]logfile]
      [-nows] [-ws port] [-x [rlmdown|rlmremove]]
      [-install_service] [-service_name sname]
```

The `-c license_file` option specifies which license file to use. This option overrides the setting of the `RLM_LICENSE` environment variable. The `license_file` parameter can be a directory containing license files, all of which will be processed.

The `-dlog logfile` specifies the pathname for the server debug log. If `logfile` is preceded by the `+` character, the log file will be appended to; otherwise it is overwritten. All ISV servers will write their output to the same log file specified in the `-dlog` option.

The `-nows` and `-ws port` options control the operation of the embedded Web Server. The `-nows` option instructs the RLM server not to start the embedded web server. The `-ws port` option instructs the RLM server to use `port` as the port number for the web server. If the RLM server cannot bind the web server port (5054 by default), it will exit.

The `-x [rlmdown | rlmremove]` option controls whether the `rlmdown` and/or `rlmremove` commands will be processed by the server. Specifying `-x` by itself will disable both commands. Specifying either command name after the `-x` will disable just that command.

The `-install_service` and `-service_name sname` options are used to run the RLM server as a service under Windows, as in the following example:

```
rlm -install_service -dlog [+]logfile [-service_name sname] <rlm runtime args>
```

The `<rlm runtime args>` are those specified above; when the service starts, it will pass these additional arguments to the RLM server.

A complete command line might look like this:

```
rlm -install_service -service_name rlm-xyz -dlog
```

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```
c:\logs\server.log -c c:\licenses\xyz.lic
```

This installs the RLM server as a service under the name `rlm-xyz`. When started via the Services control panel or at boot time, RLM will be passed the `-c c:\licenses\xyz.lic` argument, and it will write its debug log information to the file `c:\logs\server.log`.

Installed RLM services are also deleted with the `rlm` program. Services must be stopped using the Windows Service control panel application before they can be deleted. Deleting a service only removes it from the Windows service database; it does not uninstall the `rlm` executable or associated license file(s).

The service can be removed by calling the executable like this:

```
rlm -delete_service [-service_name sname]
```

where `sname` is an optional name for the installed service. If not specified, `service_name` defaults to `rlm`. If `service_name` contains embedded whitespace, it must be enclosed in double quotes.

ASN1C Windows SDK Installation

The following are types of license we support for SDK installations:

- Floating
- Per-user (Internet-based float)
- Node-locked
- Time-limited
- Evaluation.

In some cases, we can provide a combination of these (for example, node-locked – time-limited).

An ASN1C distribution that uses the floating license server works by contacting the server to obtain a license key. A license file (`client.lic`) that facilitates communication with the floating license server is provided by Objective Systems.

A per-user Internet-based license is the standard model for per-user licenses. With this license in place, the application will check-out a license from our web-server for a given duration. Up to some given number of these licenses may be checked-out concurrently. The default number is three, but this can be increased by purchasing additional development seats. The user does not have any restriction as to where they can use these licenses as long as the concurrent count is not exceeded.

An ASN1C node-locked distribution works by reading the contents of a license file supplied by Objective Systems. This type of license is normally used if the computer(s) on which the user wishes to use the SDK does not have Internet connectivity. In this case, the user is required to provide us with information that identifies the machine (host name, host ID, etc) in advance. This file is then created with these details to ensure the SDK application is running only on a permitted host.

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Time-limited licenses are similar except that they limit use to a given period of time rather than to specific machines. These can be combined with node-locked to restrict use to a machine for a given time-period. Evaluation licenses are similar except that they may contain further safeguards to ensure the license is used for evaluation purposes only (for example, a hard-coded expiration of the run-time).

In all cases, the basic installation is the same: double-click the executable installation package downloaded from the Objective Systems website and follow the setup program installation instructions.

If a floating license file was provided (`client.lic`), this file should be downloaded and installed using the ASNIC `-licinstall` command-line option as follows:

```
C:\> cd \acvNNN\bin
C:\acvNNN\bin> asn1c -licinstall <filepath>
```

where “<filepath.>” would be replaced with the full path name to the `client.lic` file. Using `-licinstall` will ensure that any old evaluation or other license files are first cleaned out before copy the `client.lic` file to the proper location.

The file can also be installed by copying it to the ASNIC installation's `bin` subfolder. By default, this will be `c:\acvNNN\bin`. The license may also be copied to a folder pointed to by the `RLM_LICENSE` environment variable if desired. If this is done, the user should ensure that no other license files are present on the computer. This can be done by using the ASNIC `-licfiles` command-line option to get a list of files and manually deleting them or by invoking ASNIC with the `-licdeact` command-line option:

The RLM `client.lic` file can also be installed using the ASNIC GUI. To use the GUI, click Tools → Options and then select the license tab. If a license is currently active, it must first be deactivated by clicking the Deactivate button. The File radio button can then be pressed or the license file dragged-and-dropped into the License Key box.

If an Objective Systems license file is provided (`osyslic.txt`), this file may be installed in the same way as in the floating case.

A license key value may also be provided along with or instead of a license file. To install this, go to GUI license window as in the above case and copy and paste the key into the License Key box and click Activate.

The key also can be installed using the command-line version of the tool with the `-lickey` qualifier:

```
C:\> cd \acvNNN\bin
C:\acvNNN\bin> asn1c -lickey <key> -nusage
```

If no errors are reported, you can test the license by executing `asn1c` without any command-line arguments; a usage display will appear.

ASN1C Run-time Deployment Kit Installation

The run-time deployment kits packages come in three varieties: limited (node-locked or time-limited), floating, and unlimited. All are installed the same way. Run-time deployment kits contain libraries optimized for space and performance.

Installation proceeds in the same way as the SDK installation: double-click the executable package and follow the setup installation program instructions. By default the root installation folder will be the same. The kit contains optimized libraries in the `lib_opt` folders. The sample programs provided in the SDK link against libraries in the `lib` folder, so users may find it easier to rename this folder to `lib_nonopt` and rename the `lib_opt` folder to `lib`.

If the SDK uses a floating license, generated application code that uses the development libraries will contain an embedded 30-day time-limited license. For limited run-time deployment, users may need to use a license file (`osyslic.txt` or `rtkey.dat`) supplied by Objective Systems. The license file contains host name information for the limited deployment; the host names may also be embedded within the client license (`client.lic`); in this case, the binary license is not needed. See [Deploying a Run-time Library with a Binary License File](#) for more details.

For a floating run-time license, applications will work off of the same run-time license server as the SDK and therefore can run concurrently on the licensed number of machines.

Unlimited deployment run-time libraries do not need any additional license files.

Testing the C or C++ Runtime Components

The default C and C++ run-time libraries for Windows were built with Microsoft Visual Studio 2017. Included with Visual Studio 2017 are libraries built for Visual Studio 2013, 2015, 2019, and 2022. Libraries built for Cygwin and MinGW are included as well in the 32-bit Windows package. Custom built add-on packages may be available for older Microsoft Visual Studio versions or other development environments. These may be provided for an additional fee. If a package containing run-time source code was purchased, the run-time libraries may be rebuilt using any ANSI-standard C or C++ compiler.

Operation of any of the different run-time libraries may be verified by executing the sample programs. These can be found in the various sample directories (`sample_ber`, `sample_der`, `sample_per`, ...)

For example, we will assume ASN1C for C/C++ has been installed. To test the default Visual Studio 2017 BER C++ encode/decode capabilities, open a Visual Studio 2017 command prompt and execute the following commands (note that if the 64-bit version of the product is being used, a Visual Studio 2017 64-bit command window must be opened):

```
C:\> cd \acvNNN\c\sample_ber\employee
C:\acvNNN\c\sample_ber\employee> nmake
[...]
```


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```
C:\acvNNN\c\sample_ber\employee> writer
                                     [...]
C:\acvNNN\c\sample_ber\employee> reader
```

The output from running these commands has been stripped for sake of clarity.

When executing the `writer` program, a file called `message.dat` will be created; its contents will be dumped to the screen as well. The `reader` program reads in `message.dat` and prints the formatted contents to the screen.

Testing the PER libraries is analogous. The employee sample is stored in `acvNNN\c\sample_per\employee`. Of special note in the PER samples is the ability to read or write *aligned* or *unaligned* PER messages through the use of command-line switches:

```
C:\acvNNN\c\sample_per\employee> writer -u
                                     [...]
C:\acvNNN\c\sample_per\employee> reader -u
                                     [...]
```

By default, the sample programs will encode using aligned PER. Using the `-u` switch will turn on unaligned encodings. Use `-a` to force aligned encodings.

Testing other encoding rules proceeds in the same way.

UNIX Installations

We treat all UNIX-derived operating systems the same for the purposes of this section. Users of commercial UNIXes, Linux, and MacOS X should be able to install the software following roughly the same steps. Each platform has its own idiosyncrasies, so installation procedures will vary.

Installing the RLM Floating License Server

The RLM server is packaged as a `.tar.gz` archive for Linux, Linux-64, and MacOS X. As in the Windows installation, users will need a license file to run the server (usually called `server.lic`). The server can be run manually from the command line or at boot time.

Command-line options are detailed in the section [Installing the RLM Floating License Server](#). They are identical between Windows and UNIX installations.

Running the RLM server at boot time usually requires the addition of an init script. Examples are provided in the README provided with the RLM distribution package. Users are likewise encouraged to consult platform-specific documentation to determine how best to set up boot time services, since configurations between various platforms may differ considerably.

ASN1C UNIX SDK Installation

The SDK kits are distributed as `.tar.gz` archives and may be unpacked anywhere on the system. Common UNIX convention is to install commercial products in the `/opt` directory hierarchy. The naming conventions for these kits are the same as those described in the [Windows Installations](#) section.

Kits delivered for Linux, Linux-64, and macOS use the Reprise License Manager and provide a floating license capability similar to the Windows kits. An RLM floating license client file (`client.lic`) is provided for floating license configurations, while an evaluation license key will be provided for customers who are evaluating.

The other license options documented for the Windows case (per-user Internet-based, node-locked, and time-limited) are available for Linux/UNIX as well. These use an `osyslic.txt` file or key as previously documented.

Please note that the graphical interface is not included with all UNIX kits since it depends on the Qt libraries. Objective Systems compiles these libraries manually for each platform to ensure that the GUI is portable. On systems where this is not possible (Linux 32-bit, Linux ARM, and Solaris), no GUI is provided.

Unpacking the SDK

In order to unpack the kit, follow these directions:

1. Copy the installation kit to the top-level directory in which the compiler should be installed.
2. Unzip the package using the GNU unzip tool:

```
$ gunzip <installation kit>
```

3. Unpackage the files using tar:

```
$ tar xf <installation kit>
```

On systems equipped with GNU tar, the final two steps may be combined into a single command:

```
$ tar xzf <installation kit>
```

Unpacking the kit will result in a new directory hierarchy rooted at `asn1c-vNNN`. Users may wish to add the `bin` subdirectory to the system-wide `PATH` in order to run ASN1C from any location.

On systems that do not have Qt installed, it may be necessary to modify the `LD_LIBRARY_PATH` (or its equivalent) so that the shared libraries provided by Objective Systems will be loaded when running the GUI. A shell script named `acgui.sh` may have been provided that will do this setup and then start the GUI.

Installing the SDK License

The license provided by Objective Systems comes in one of three varieties: an RLM license file, a license activation key, or an Objective Systems license file. The RLM license file is available only for Linux, Linux-64, and macOS systems and is used only for floating licenses.

The RLM license file should be installed in the same way as described in the section on Windows using the `-licinstall` command-line option. This will ensure that any old license files and artifacts are cleaned out before the license file is copied to the proper location.

The file also may be manually copied to the `bin` subdirectory of the ASN1C installation. The `RLM_LICENSE` environment variable can also point to the directory in which the license file is located. ASN1C should be invoked with the `-licdeact` option prior to doing this to ensure old license files are cleaned out.

If the GUI is available for the Linux/UNIX system, the license tab available with the Tools → Options command may be used to install the license file as well.

An Objective Systems `osyslic.txt` file may be installed in the same way as described above for installing an RLM license file.

A license activation key may also have been provided which can be entered from the command-line as follows:

```
$ ./asn1c -lickey <key> -nouserage
```

where `<key>` would be replaced with the key value. No output will appear on the screen if a successful activation occurred.

The license key may also be entered in the GUI in the same way described in [ASN1C Windows SDK Installation](#). The GUI application will need to be run from the command-line if a desktop launcher was not manually created:

```
$ ./acgui.sh
```

To test whether the license was properly installed, run ASN1C from the command line or start the GUI:

```
$ ./asn1c
```

```
$ ./acgui.sh
```

If a usage message appears in the first case, or the GUI reports no license errors in the second case, the installation was successful.

ASN1C UNIX Run-time Deployment Kit Installation

ASN1C run-time deployment kits come in three varieties: limited (node-locked or time-limited), floating, and unlimited. All are installed the same way. The installation procedures are analogous to those used for the UNIX SDK.

UNIX Installations

Run-time deployment kits come with libraries that have been optimized for performance and space. These libraries are included in the `lib_opt` directories included in the specific language subdirectories of the installation.

Limited deployments may require the use of a text (`osyslic.txt`) or binary (`rtkey.dat`) license file. See [Deploying a Run-time Library with a Binary License File](#) for more details for how to deploy the library in this case.

Testing the C or C++ Run-time Components

The C and C++ run-time libraries for UNIX are typically built with the GNU `gcc/g++` compiler and/or the standard native compiler provided by the manufacturer of a particular type of UNIX (for example, CC for Solaris). Two symbolic links are used within the `c` or `cpp` subdirectory to select the version of the run-time libraries to be used: `lib` and `platform.mk`.

By default, these are set to point at standard compiler of the run-time libraries for a particular platform. This is easily changed by deleting the links and setting them to point at another run-time library. For example, on Solaris, to change from using libraries compiled with CC:

```
rm lib
rm platform.mk
ln -s libCC lib
ln -s platform.CC platform.mk
```

Soft links are used to preserve a common build infrastructure. Users are free to modify the platform-specific definitions as needed to customize compilations for their application builds.

You can verify operation of any of the different run-time kits by executing the sample programs. These can be found in the different sample directories (`sample_ber`, `sample_der`, `sample_per`, etc. depending on what run-time kits were installed).

Assuming that ASN1C was installed in `/opt/asn1c-v760`, testing the C BER employee sample program would look like this:

```
~$ cd /opt/asn1c-v760/c/sample_ber/employee
/opt/asn1c-v760/c/sample_ber/employee$ make
                                     [...]
/opt/asn1c-v760/c/sample_ber/employee$ ./writer
                                     [...]
/opt/asn1c-v760/c/sample_ber/employee$ ./reader
```

The output generated by running these programs has been stripped for sake of clarity. The `writer` application creates a file called `message.dat` and dumps the output to the terminal. The `reader` application loads the file and prints it out in a brace-formatted display.

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The PER and XER samples can be built analogously. Of special note in the PER samples is the ability to read or write *aligned* or *unaligned* PER messages through the use of command-line switches:

```
/opt/asn1c-v760/c/sample_per/employee$ ./writer -u
[...]
```

```
/opt/asn1c-v760/c/sample_per/employee$ ./reader -u
[...]
```

By default, the sample programs will encode using aligned PER. Using the `-u` switch will turn on unaligned encodings. Use `-a` to force aligned encodings.

ASN1C Python Run-time Installation

In order to use Python code generated by ASN1C, the Python run-time must be installed. This is installed using the following command:

```
pip install --find-links https://www.obj-sys.com/PythonRuntime/vnnn --no-deps
osyspyrt
```

where `vnnn` is the three-digit ASN1C version (e.g., `v740`, `v741`, `v742`, etc.).

'pip' is an installer program available in Python 3.4 and higher. Consult the Python documentation at python.org for further information.

Compiling and Linking Generated Code

ASN1C comes with a variety of options to assist with compiling and linking generated code. Of principal interest are the `-genmake` and `-vsproj` options (for generating makefiles and Visual Studio projects, respectively). ASN1C can also generate Ant build files for Java using the `-genant` switch.

The generated makefiles may not integrate with users' build systems, so please note the following:

1. The include paths should include `rtsrc`, `rtxsrc` (if developing with C/C++; this directory is not used for C#), and the run-time source directories needed for their rulesets (`rtbersrc`, `rtpersrc`, `rtxersrc`, `rtxmlsrc`).
2. The library paths should point at the `lib` or `lib_opt` directory.

When developing using Java, the class path must include `asn1rt.jar` in order to properly locate compiled classes. This can be specified on the command-line by using the `-cp` or `-classpath` switches or else by modifying the system-wide `CLASSPATH` environment variable.

Users who have purchased an unlimited run-time library must link against this library in order to remove license-checking from their application. Users who are linking dynamically do not need to relink their applications, but

may instead replace the shared libraries (DLLs or .so files) with those contained in the unlimited redistribution package.

ASN1C Licensing Procedures

It is not unusual during the course of application development, deployment, and maintenance that customers find it necessary to update and or upgrade their licenses. This may happen as you add new deployment hosts, upgrade the software, or transition between different platforms. The procedures described in the following sections should be applied if needed to ensure that the SDK and run-time libraries work properly.

While the format differs slightly, each supported language embeds the run-time key in generated source files. The key is checked by the node-locked run-time libraries as the program executes. Unlimited run-time libraries do not check the key at all.

Because the key is embedded in generated sources, it is recommended that users regenerate their source code when receiving a new license. If this is not possible or is undesirable, a binary license may be generated and used (as described in following sections).

Updating an SDK License

Users may be supplied with a new SDK license file in several circumstances:

1. When switching from an evaluation license to a permanent one.
2. When upgrading from an older version of the software to a newer version.
3. When migrating from one license style (e.g., `osyslic.txt`) to another (e.g., `asn1c.lic`).
4. When adding new SDK or run-time deployment hosts.

When updating the license, users should take care to remove the old license files and adjust the `RLM_LICENSE` or `OSLICDIR` environment variables if needed. This can be done using the `-licinstall` or `-licdeact` command-line options or by clicking the 'Deactivate' button in the GUI.

After updating the license, users are advised to regenerate their code and recompile their applications so that the new license information is properly embedded. This is the easiest way to ensure that the application will run properly on the target hosts.

Deploying a Run-time Library with a Binary License File

When it is impossible or undesirable to regenerate code, users can generate a binary license file for use with their deployment libraries. (This is only needed with per-host deployments; unlimited runtime libraries do not check the license, but users must link against these libraries in order for their applications to run properly.)

To do this, ASN1C can be run with the `-genlic` option, which generates a file called `rtkey.dat`. This file must be installed with the user's application in order for it to execute.

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For the C/C++ run-time an environment variable named ACLICFILE must be defined to point to the file. This environment variable must point at the fully-qualified name of the file; for example:

```
~$ export ACLICFILE=/opt/asn1c-v760/rtkey.dat
```

For the Java run-time the ACLICFILE environment variable also works. With Java two other options are to place the file anywhere in the application's class path or to place the file into the asn1rt.jar file.

For the C# run-time the ACLICFILE environment variable also works. With C# another option is to place the file anywhere in the system's PATH (i.e., into any of the folders indicated by the PATH environment variable).

When replacing a binary license file, users are advised to purge the host system of old licenses and to adjust the ACLICFILE environment variable as needed.

Deploying a Run-time Library with a Text License File

Applications linked with limited run-time libraries may also be deployed with a text license file named osyslic.txt that contains the ASN1C run-time key and would be furnished by Objective Systems.

For the C/C++ run-time an environment variable named ACLICFILE must be defined to point to the file. This environment variable must point at the fully-qualified name of the file; for example:

```
~$ export ACLICFILE=/opt/asn1c-v760/osyslic.txt
```

For the Java run-time the ACLICFILE environment variable also works. With Java two other options are to place the file anywhere in the application's class path or to place the file into the asn1rt.jar file.

For the C# run-time the ACLICFILE environment variable also works. With C# another option is to place the file anywhere in the system's PATH (i.e., into any of the folders indicated by the PATH environment variable).

When replacing a text license file, users are advised to purge the host system of old licenses and to adjust the ACLICFILE environment variable as needed.

Further Documentation

Up-to-date documentation on ASN1C's SDK and runtime kits is always available on Objective Systems' website at <https://obj-sys.com/support.php>. Historical documentation and change logs are also available for users of older versions.

Users who purchased a CD distribution kit will find all applicable PDFs for their version of ASN1C on that CD.

Backwards Compatibility

This section contains notes for users considering upgrading to a new version.

Backwards Compatibility

Version 6.0.x

ASN1C underwent significant changes between version 5.8x and 6.0x, including some that affect code generation. These changes will affect users who are attempting an upgrade: the two versions are not API compatible.

Many of the changes can be procedurally applied. To help assist users in this effort, we have included the `rtport.pl` script in newer kits to reduce some of the labor associated with an upgrade. We have also included the `asn1compat.h` file for C/C++ users; this can be included in your sources to help assist a transition between versions.

Version 6.1.x

Version 6.1.x introduced changes to Java and C# code generation to help help reduce the use of system resources in enumeration-heavy specifications. These changes are mostly transparent to users, but those who are working directly with enumerated types will need to access those fields using special accessor methods; in most cases, all that is needed is to add parentheses after the identifier. These changes are discussed in finer detail in the Java and C# User's Manuals.

Version 6.3.x

Version 6.3.x introduced a modification to Java code generation so that it would embed the run time key in generated code instead of requiring users to execute a script (`setkey.bat` or `setkey.sh`) as in previous versions. Users upgrading to version 6.3 from 6.2 will need to regenerate their code in order to properly use the new library.

Version 6.5.x

In version 6.5, Objective Systems adopted the use of the Reprise License Manager for Windows, Linux, and macOS installations. Users who are upgrading from earlier versions will need to acquire a new license file from Objective Systems in order to validate their installations. For all other platforms, the legacy license format (`osyslic.txt`) has been retained.

Support

Questions related to installation and support for ASN1C may be directed via email to support@obj-sys.com.